

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 05913 250657Z

21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIEP-01

MC-02 ACDA-05 AID-05 /072 W

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O R 250615Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2232

INFO CINCEUR

DOD WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 5913

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA, US

SUBJECT: MINDEF SULTAN CALLS FOR DIVERSIFICATION OF ARMS SOURCES

1. PRINCE SULTAN STATED AUG 23 IN TA'IFITHAT DIVERSIFICATION OF ARMS SOURCES IS PREFERABLE TO RELYING ON THE VICISSITUDES OF SINGLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT. HE SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS FOLLOWING THIS POLICL AND HAS BENEFITED FROM IT. MINDEF ADDED THAT SAG WAS CONSIDERING ESTABLISHMENT OF A PAN-ARAB ARAB INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC AND MILITARY STUDIES. SULTAN'S STATEMENT WAS REPORTED AT LENGTH IN ALL SAUDI PAPERS.

A2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH PRINCE SULTAN HAS BEEN THOUGHT TO FAVOR DIVERSIFYING ARMS PURCHASES FOR SOME TIME, PRINCE FAHD HAS HEWN TO A "BUY AMERICAN" LINE AND UNTIL NOW MINDEF HAS PUBLICLY FOLLOWED HIS LEAD. EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT SULTAN STATEMENT FOLLOWING CAIRO CONFERENCE ON CREATING ARAB ARMS INDUSTRY MAY BE SEEN--IN ADDITION TO OBVIOUS SOVIET/ARAB CONNOTATION--AS A SIGN AS WELL OF SAUDI IMPATIENCE WITH LONG DELAYS ON AMERICAN PURCHASES. RECENT USG CONFIDENTIAL

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TREATMENT OF LONGTIME FRIENDLY ARMS PURCHASERS JORDAN

AND TURKEY THREW SHUDDER INTO SAUDIS. SULTAN'S STATEMENT
THUS MAY ALSO BE RESPONSE TO LESSON LEARNED OF UNCERTAINTIES
OF BUYING US ARMS.

AKINS

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